

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Division of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Bureau of Educator Preparation, Certification, Support & Assessment

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Mandated Reporting

Much of the information below relates to *basic* mandatory reporting requirements. However, it is intended to ***highlight*** specific reporting requirements ***FOR school employees*** regarding ***suspected child abuse or neglect BY school employees***—with special emphasis on Superintendents' responsibilities.

Under Section 17a-101(b) of the C.G.S. the following ***school personnel**** are ***required to report*** suspected child abuse or neglect:

The ***list*** of Mandated Reporters ***also includes*** the following:

- School Teachers
- School Principals
- School Guidance Counselors
- Social Workers*
- School Paraprofessionals
- School Coaches or Coaches of Intramural or Interscholastic Athletics
- Psychologists*
- Registered Nurses*
- Licensed Professional Counselors
- Police Officers*

* Or those persons who work in schools, e.g., police officers who are School Resource Officers or DARE instructors, school nurses, school psychologists, etc.

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| Optometrists | Battered Women's Counselors |
| Chiropractors | Parole Officers (Juvenile or Adult) |
| Dental Hygienists | Pharmacists |
| Dentists | Physical Therapists |
| Licensed Physicians | Physician Assistants |
| Licensed Practical Nurses | Probation Officers |
| Licensed Surgeons | Sexual Assault Counselors |
| Podiatrists | Licensed Marital and Family Therapists |
| Medical Examiners | Licensed or Unlicensed Resident Interns |
| Members of the Clergy | Licensed or Unlicensed Resident Physicians |
| Mental Health Professionals | Licensed/Certified Alcohol & Drug Counselors |
| DCF Employees | Licensed/Certified EMS Providers |

- Any person paid to care for a child in any public or private facility, child day care center, group day care home or family day care home which is licensed by the State.
- Department of Public Health employees responsible for the licensing of child day care centers, group day care homes, family day care homes or youth camps.
- The Child Advocate and any employee of the Office of the Child Advocate.

- NOTES:** a) While not all categories of school employees are included in the statutory list of Mandated Reporters, all should be encouraged to adhere to the same reporting requirements. Surely, all those employed in our schools share a moral responsibility for the welfare of students; and those holding certificates, permits or authorizations issued by the State Board of Education have a professional responsibility as well—even though they may not all be obligated legally under the terms of C.G.S. Section 17a-101(b).
- b) Under the provisions of Section 17a-101i(e) of the C.G.S., local and regional boards of education were required to adopt written policies regarding the reporting by school employees of suspected child abuse in accordance with Sections 17a-101a to 17a-101d, inclusive, and 17a-103 on or before 2/1/97.

What Must Be Reported?

Child Abuse: Any child or youth who has a non-accidental physical injury, or injury which is at variance with the history given of such injury, or who is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment.

Child Neglect: Any child or youth who has been abandoned or is being denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotionally or morally or is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his/her well-being or has been abused.

Imminent Risk of Serious Harm to Child: Any child or youth who has been placed at imminent risk of serious harm.

Child Under Thirteen (13) with Venereal Disease: A *physician* or *facility* must report to the DCF Hotline upon the consultation, examination or treatment for venereal disease of any child not more than 12 years old.

Mandated Reporters

- Mandated Reporters having reasonable cause to suspect or believe a child has been abused or neglected or placed in imminent risk of serious harm, shall report orally by telephone or in person to DCF or a law enforcement agency as soon as practicable, but not later than twelve hours after having had such reasonable cause. *Sec. 17a-101b(a)*
- Within 48 hours of the oral report, a Mandated Reporter shall submit a written report to DCF. *Sec. 17a-101c*
- When a Mandated Reporter has reasonable cause to suspect or believe any child has been abused or neglected by a staff member (this includes all staff, e.g., teachers, principals, maintenance workers, cafeteria employees, information technologists, etc.) of a public or private school or facility or institution that provides care for such child, the Mandated Reporter is required to report as above. *Sec. 17a-101b(d)*
(Note:: When DCF notifies the head of the institution, facility or public or private school, that following an investigation there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused by a staff member (not including persons holding certificates, permits or authorizations issued by the SBE), the school/facility may suspend the staff person. See column to the right regarding mandatory suspension of certified staff in similar circumstances.)
- When the Mandated Reporter is a staff member of a public or private facility that provides care for the child, or of a public or private school, the reporter shall also submit a copy of the written report to the person in charge of the facility or school (Superintendent). *Sec. 17a-101c*
- When a report concerns an employee of a child-care facility licensed by the state, a Mandated Reporter shall send a copy of the written report to the head of the state-licensing agency. *Sec. 17a-101c*

Superintendents of Schools

- When a Mandated Reporter submits to the person in charge of the facility or school (supt.) a copy of the written report of suspected abuse or neglect by a school employee holding a certificate, authorization or permit issued by the SBE, the person in charge of such facility/school SHALL send a copy of the report to the Commissioner of Education. *Sec. 17a-101c*
- DCF notifies the facility/school head if a report is made about a school employee, unless the person is the alleged perpetrator. The school or facility head shall notify the child's parent or responsible person immediately. *Sec. 17a-101b(d)*
- Investigations of suspected child abuse/neglect by school employees are conducted by DCF. If, after investigation, DCF has reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused or neglected by a person holding a certificate, permit or authorization issued by the SBE & DCF has recommended the employee be placed on the child abuse/neglect registry, w/in five working days, DCF must notify the Supt. of such finding—whether or not the child was a student in the employing district or school. *Sec. 17a-101(a)*
- The Supt. SHALL suspend such (certified) school employee with pay. (Suspension shall remain in effect until the BOE acts pursuant to the provisions of Section 10-151 of the C.G.S.) *Sec. 17a-101(a)*
- Within 72 hours of suspension, the Supt. shall notify the local or regional BOE and the Commissioner of Education (who shall maintain the information as confidential), of the reasons for, and conditions of, such suspension, and shall disclose the necessary records to the Commissioner. *Sec. 17a-101(a)*
- If the employment contract is terminated, the Superintendent shall notify the Commissioner of Education w/in 72 hours and the Commissioner may commence revocation proceedings. *Sec. 17a-101(a)*

Failure to Report

- Pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 17a-101a, a mandated reporter who fails to make the required report shall be fined not less than \$500 nor more than \$2,500, and shall be required to participate in an educational and training program pursuant to Sec. 17a-101(d).
- Under C.G.S. Sec. 17a-101(d), a mandated reporter who fails to report to DCF as required pursuant to Sec. 17a-101a "shall be required to participate in an educational and training program established by the [DCF] commissioner. The program may be provided by one or more private organizations approved by the commissioner, provided the entire costs of the program shall be paid from fees charged to the participants, the amount of which shall be subject to the approval of the commissioner."